Montana Statewide Forest Resource Strategy

MONTANA DNRC

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June 16, 2010

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation has completed the most comprehensive and ambitious analysis of our forestry assistance programs to date, and I am pleased to present this Forest Resource Strategy based on our findings.

This strategy consists of both an analysis of our focus areas: Forest Biodiversity & Resiliency, Wildfire and Public Safety, Forest Products and Biomass Utilization, Sustainable Urban Landscapes, and Changing Forest Ownership Pattern, and also a plan of action to address both immediate and long term needs over the next three years.

I am excited about the completion of Montana's Forest Resource Strategy for a number of reasons. First and foremost, it has provided the opportunity for us to hone in on those critical landscapes and match the needs on the landscape with the program authorities in State & Private Forestry programs. This ensures the maximum benefit for the finite assistance available. Second, it provides for cross-program collaboration, which serves as a multiplier in terms of impact on the ground, i.e. we can accomplish multiple program objectives within the same watershed, community, forest or rangeland. Third, our Strategy serves as the catalyst through which we can reach out to partners, peer agencies, landowners, the public and other stakeholders in a meaningful, collaborative spirit because we have tangible data and are able to effectively communicate our vision for the critical landscapes we've identified.

As with any strategy, this document and the requisite planning/analysis are only as good as the people who will bring its recommendations to fruition. My intentions for Montana's Forest Resource Strategy are that it serves as the framework to which our program goals, work objectives and projects are tiered and that it be revisited and revised as appropriate to ensure alignment between what we observe on the ground and what we hope to achieve through our projects.

As for the people who will transform the words on these pages into actions in the field, the Montana DNRC is truly fortunate to have dedicated, professional and capable people who have invested their knowledge and expertise throughout this process. I commend them for their work in developing the State Assessment and the Forest Resource Strategy and thank them for their service to the State of Montana.

Sincerely,

ROBERT A. HARRINGTON
Montana State Forester

Checklist for Statewide Forest Resource Assessments and Strategies Requirements of the 2008 Farm Bill

The State Assessment and Strategy must be submitted to the USDA Forest Service, with this check list signed by the State Forester, by June 18, 2010. Federal review will focus on the requirements as outlined in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill).

State: MONTANA
Approved by the State Forester: _____ 6/16/10
Name *Date*

****

Statewide Forest Resource Assessment Includes:

The conditions and trends of forest resources in the state ..... Yes ❑ No ❑
The threats to forest lands and resources in the state consistent with national priorities..... Yes ❑ No ❑
Areas or regions of the state that are a priority ..... Yes ❑ No ❑
Any multi-state areas that are a regional priority ..... Yes ❑ No ❑

Statewide Forest Resource Strategy Includes:

Long-term strategies to address threats to forest resources in the state* ..... Yes ❑ No ❑
Description of resources necessary for state forester to address state-wide strategy* ..... Yes ❑ No ❑

**Can be presented in a strategies matrix with columns for (a) programs that contribute, (b) resources required, (c) national objective it supports, and (d) performance measure(s) that will be used for each strategy.*

Stakeholder Groups Coordinated with for the Statewide Assessment and Strategy:

Note: this could be identified in the body of the documents or as an appendix.

State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee (required) ..... Yes ❑ No ❑
State Wildlife Agency (required) ..... Yes ❑ No ❑
State Technical Committee (required) ..... Yes ❑ No ❑
Lead agency for the Forest Legacy Program (if not the state forestry agency) (required) .. Yes ❑ No ❑
Applicable Federal land management agencies (required) ..... Yes ❑ No ❑

Other Plans Incorporated in Statewide Assessment and Strategy:

Community wildfire protection plans (required) ..... Yes ❑ No ❑
State wildlife action plans (required) ..... Yes ❑ No ❑
Other ..... Yes ❑ No ❑

❑ **Deemed to be sufficient (all requirements met)**
Comments:

❑ **Not deemed to be sufficient* (missing one or more requirements)**
*Indicate Corrective Action(s) Necessary to Meet Sufficiency Requirement:

Certified by Regional Forester/NA Director: _____ _____
Name *Date*

DECISION BY THE *DEPUTY CHIEF FOR STATE & PRIVATE FORESTRY*

Approve ____ Date _____
Disapprove ____

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Acknowledgements

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) would like to thank the U.S. Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters for providing funding assistance for this project. Inclusion of the Statewide Assessment Working Group, DNRC Forestry Division, Forestry Assistance and Fire &Aviation Bureau staff were critical in the development of the Response Strategy. The full list of the working group membership can be found in the Montana Statewide Assessment of Forest Resources – Baseline Data and Methodology.

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The Redesign Approach

The "Redesign Approach" involves an examination of current conditions and trends affecting all forest lands. It focuses on addressing issues of national importance, prioritizes the best use of available technology, and data to assess forest conditions, and design programs to work at appropriate scales and achieve significant outcomes.

Through the "Redesign Approach," all states are required to develop a State Assessment of Forest Resources as well as a Statewide Forest Resource Strategy. These two products are to become the basic foundation for strategically delivering Montana's technical and financial assistance programs on "critical landscapes."

In 2007,the USDA Forest Service assembled a State & Private Forestry (S&PF) Redesign Board to examine current trends affecting trees and forests and to define the most effective role that state governments could play in sustaining benefits from forests. This new approach is intended to shape and influence forest land use on a scale and in a way that optimizes public benefits from trees and forests for now and in the future.

Trees and forests, and the public benefits they provide, are being threatened at a scale and pace that exceeds the abilities of the current S&PF programs.

Urban sprawl, insects and disease, invasive species, and large-scale wildfires have resulted in damage and fragmentation of vast acreages of forest. The increasingly volatile and global nature of the forest products industry continues to put pressure on local, state and regional economies. Budgets are becoming increasingly tighter at both the state and national levels—forcing an examination of how forestry programs contribute to other national priorities.

In 2009-2010, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) conducted their Statewide Assessment of Forest Resources. This "Assessment Model" covered all forestland, regardless of ownership type, and was accomplished using geographic information system (GIS) analytic techniques. The Montana Statewide Assessment Working Group , a consortium of over 40 interested stakeholders, developed 11 separate sub-model layers based on the National Guidance objectives. Results of the analysis will direct the future deployment of the 2007 Farm Bill programs as they relate to planning, information and education, technical assistance or financial assistance activities and may be used to demonstrate the value of forests and forestry on the regional economy, environmental health, and quality of life. This analysis provides insight where future S&PF Programming may be most beneficial.

From the scoping process the Work Group identified five priority issues for the forests of Montana. The assessment model will recommend where specific

outreach may be directed and what types of program outcomes may be sought.

ISSUE-BASED FOCUS AREAS:

- Forest Biodiversity & Resilient Forests
- Wildfire & Public Safety
- Forest Products & Biomass Utilization
- Sustainable Urban Forest Landscapes
- Changing Forest Ownership Patterns

In February 2010, the Statewide Assessment Response Strategy planning effort began. The resulting collaborative "Resource Strategy" sets the implementation track for delivering the S&PF programs to critical landscapes identified in the model. The "Strategy" document identifies indicators for each "Focus Area," defines strategies, creates linkages between programs, and sets targets.

National and Regional Overview of Statewide Forest Resource Strategies and Purpose of Federal Redesign

The intent of the new approach to S&PF is to shape and influence use of forest land to optimize public benefits from trees and forests for both current and future generations.

The USFS worked closely with the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) to:

- Examine current conditions and trends affecting forest lands
- Review existing S&PF programs to determine how they can best address threats to forests
- Develop a strategy for delivering a relevant and meaningful set of S&PF programs and opportunities

Nationally, three consensus-based S&PF National Priorities and 11 subsequent objectives have been identified:

Conserve working forest landscapes

- *Identify and conserve high priority forest ecosystems and landscapes.*
- *Actively and sustainably manage forests.*

Protect forests from harm

- *Restore fire-adapted lands and reduce risk of wildfire impacts.*
- *Identify, manage and reduce threats to forest and ecosystem health.*

Enhance public benefits from trees and forests

- *protect and enhance water quality and quantity.*
- *Improve air quality and conserve energy.*
- *Assist communities in planning for and reducing wildfire risks.*
- *Maintain and enhance economic benefits and values of trees and forests.*
- *Protect, conserve and enhance wildlife and fish habitat.*
- *Connect people to trees and forests and engage them in environmental stewardship activities.*
- *Manage and restore trees and forests to mitigate and adapt to global climate change.*

In order to ensure that S&PF resources are being focused on high priority areas with the greatest opportunity to achieve meaningful outcomes, each state, territory, and island works collaboratively with the USFS and other key partners to develop a comprehensive statewide forest resources strategy. The assessment provides a comprehensive analysis of the forest related conditions, trends, threats, and opportunities in each state. The forest resources strategy is a supplement to the assessment that describes general Focus Areas and their associated strategic issues and defines task-oriented action items, subsequent outcomes and the programs used to address them.

Federal Redesign works towards maximizing the public benefits from our forest, regardless of ownership patterns. S&PF programs increase the capacity of state forestry agencies and their partners to manage forest lands and maximize ecological, social and economic benefits for all Montanans. Redesign "blurs" ownership boundary lines, whether Federal, state, tribal, family forest or industrial forests in terms of influencing the greatest "positive" change in public benefit. The Federal All Lands Approach is the next generation of closing the gap in maximizing public benefit from the forested landscape around us.

PROCESS

The Statewide Forest Resource Strategy is displayed in a "step-down" approach starting with 5 general **focus areas** and moving towards more detailed layers of related **strategies**, **action items** and eventual **deliverables**. The 5 focus areas were distilled from Work Group survey results as well as internal DNRC discussion. Each focus area was developed by an internal DNRC team and then opened to the Work Group for comments.

Each **focus area** includes a set of baseline **indicators** that capture past issues and trends as well as future forecasts that supports their importance. The focus areas are further detailed as individual **strategies** that provide insight into program and possible partner linkages. Each individual strategy is supported by succinct action items and defined **deliverables**. These are the measurable outcomes that will be evaluated as to whether the strategy is on target or needs modification.

The Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 created the partnership through which the USDA Forest Service at the National Association of State Foresters have entered into a partnership aimed at meeting State & Private Forestry Program goals. The core programs through which federal assistance is delivered are:

Forest Stewardship Program

Forest Health

Forest Legacy

Urban & Community Forestry

Conservation Education

State Fire Assistance

Volunteer Fire Assistance

National Fire Plan*

** The National Fire Plan is not a stand-alone program; rather, it is delivered through the other existing S&PF programs, primarily State and Volunteer Fire Assistance.*

Montana's State Assessment and subsequent Forest Resource Strategy will also be used to reflect areas of critical interest or critical concern based on several S&PF programs and natural resource needs. Consideration will be given to critical landscapes, as defined by the model, where not only S&PF program resources may be deployed, but also where "cross-boundary" planning, integrating all ownership types, may be involved. Montana may find the case in the future where the Strategy becomes the planning mechanism to define landscape-level, cross-jurisdictional resource management opportunities. Federal redesign competitive grants may be the catalyst for these types of watershed efforts and may leverage other financial assistance opportunities like Western State Fuels Mitigation funds, Community Protection Fuels Mitigation funds, NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program Special Initiative funds, the Forest Landscape Restoration Act and others.

Partnerships are a core element in all planning and financial assistance outreach packages. The Assessment identifies critical landscapes, the Strategy defines the strategies, actions and targets for that landscapes. Partnerships and cross-boundary cooperation will influence the greatest positive change on the landscape. The amount of current and future partners that may apply to a particular strategy are too numerous to list individually. As targeted watershed level projects are developed, unique partner lists are usually developed as an initial step.

USDA FOREST SERVICE COOPERATIVE FORESTRY ASSISTANCE ACT AUTHORITIES

The Montana State Forester's Office, housed in the DNRC is the principle conduit for the delivery of several "pass-through" program authorities set in the 2008 Farm Bill. State and Private forests, primary recipients of program services, make up about 25% of Montana's rural forests while 128 cities and towns or 56% of the state's population find themselves nestled within these urban forests. Montana's urban and rural forested landscapes provide extensive ecosystem services for the state's population in terms of clean air, enhanced soil and water quantity/quality, wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities, and a primary channel of wood fiber for the forest products infrastructure.

Forest Stewardship Program

The primary purpose of the Forest Stewardship Program is to promote the long-term stewardship of nonindustrial private forestlands, by assisting landowners in more actively managing their forest and related resources. Montana's State Department of Natural Resources & Conservation administers this program collaboratively with several state and private cooperators. The program provides assistance to Family Forest Owners and other lands where good stewardship, including agroforestry applications, will enhance and sustain the long term productivity of multiple forest resources. Special attention is given to landowners in important forest resource areas and those new to, or in the early stages of managing their land in a way that embodies multi-resource stewardship principles. The program provides landowners with the professional planning and technical assistance they need to keep

their land in a productive and healthy condition. The planning assistance offered through the Forest Stewardship Program provides landowners with enhanced access to other USDA conservation programs like the USDA Natural Resource & Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and American Tree Farm System - Sustainable Initiative (SFI) forest certification programs.

Montana's Forest Stewardship Program is advised by the Montana Forest Stewardship Steering Committee (MFSSC) and is delivered in two (2) components. Montana has utilized an innovative educational approach to lead Family Forest owners through a stewardship planning process in which landowners themselves are provided with all the information, resources and inventory process to write their own plans. Topic specific workshops are also offered for landowners looking to enhance a certain resource area or management challenge within their plan. The FSP also provides direct technical assistance to Family Forest Owners through DNRC service foresters scattered around the state.

Forest Health Program

The purpose of the Forest Health Protection Program (FHP) is to provide technical assistance to state and private forest landowners on forest health-related matters, particularly those related to disturbance agents such as native and non-native insects and pathogens. Partnerships are key across all ownerships as insects and disease of trees do not respect ownership boundaries. FHP provides forest insect and disease survey and monitoring information, and technical and financial assistance to prevent, suppress and control outbreaks threatening forest resources.

The principal activities of the FHP program are prevention, detection, evaluation, control, and eradication of forest insect and disease pests. Assistance is offered as both technical and financial. The program works across landscapes but predominantly in rural forests. Forest health is key to maintaining forests that are resilient to fire and changes in climate, that protect and enhance wildlife habitat, and that contribute to human health. The Assessment and the Strategy identify

Incorporating the Forest Legacy Program's Assessment of Need (AON)

The Montana Forest Legacy Program completed a Legacy Assessment of Need (AON) in 2000 and updated it in 2007. The AON, a requirement for states participating in the Forest Legacy Program, evaluates the need for and use of the FLP in Montana, establishes the goals and objectives for the Montana program, determines eligibility criteria for lands in be included within the program, and establishes and describes Montana Forest Legacy Areas. It includes input from many organizations, agencies, and individuals as well as contributions from a public comment period.

The Strategy will not replace the AON, but will complements its intent. While the AON defines target areas at a gross scale, the Assessment provides prioritization at the watershed level where specific emphasis can be accomplished for FLP projects. Albeit, fee title acquisition or procurement of conservation easements, the Assessment will provide inherent flexibility for the Forest Legacy Subcommittee to key in on a specific strategy that may not necessarily be designated as a high priority within the AON. The AON can be found electronically at: http://fwpiis.mt.gov/content/getItem.aspx?id=43778

current forest health threats and will guide FHP efforts for the next three years. The program will also remain flexible in order to respond to new insect and disease outbreaks as they occur.

Forest Legacy Program

The Forest Legacy Program (FLP), a Federal program in partnership with States, supports State efforts to protect environmentally sensitive forest lands. Designed to encourage the protection of privately owned forest lands, FLP is an entirely voluntary program. To maximize the public benefits it achieves, the program focuses on the acquisition of partial interests in privately owned forest lands. FLP helps the States develop and carry out their forest conservation plans. It encourages and supports acquisition of conservation easements, legally binding agreements transferring a negotiated set of property rights from one party to another, without removing the property from private ownership. Most FLP conservation easements restrict development, require sustainable forestry practices, and protect other values.

Montana FLP proposals are collected at the state level and are prioritized through a rigorous process facilitated by the Forest Legacy Subcommittee, a subcommittee of the MFSSC. The Montana Forest Legacy - Assessment of Need (AON) provides direction on the critical areas in which to focus attention. The Assessment provides prioritization of watersheds within these critical areas in order to strategically direct the proposal on the landscape. The AON will function as an appendix to the Strategy and will provide a direct linkage/ complement between the Assessment, , Strategy and AON.

Urban & Community Forestry Program

The Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) program is a cooperative effort between the US Forest Service and the State of Montana and

focuses on the stewardship of urban natural resources. With 80 percent of the nation's population (and 56% of Montana's) in urban areas, there are strong environmental, social, and economic cases to be made for the conservation of urban trees and green spaces to guide growth and revitalize communities. UCF responds to the needs of urban areas by maintaining, restoring, and improving urban forest ecosystems. Through these efforts the program encourages and promotes the creation of healthier, more livable urban environments across the nation.

Based on a three-year planning cycle, Montana's UCF program provides technical and financial assistance to cities and towns and other cooperators across the state. The UCF program is advised by the Montana Urban & Community Forestry Association (MUCFA), a volunteer group of interested stakeholders. The Assessment and Strategy will provide guidance to the UCF efforts and direct them towards urban areas within critical landscapes.

Conservation Education Program

The Conservation Education (CE) program helps people of all ages understand and appreciate Montana's natural resources—and learn how to conserve those resources for future generations. Through structured educational experiences and activities targeted to varying age groups and populations, conservation education enables people to realize how natural resources and ecosystems affect each other and how resources can be used wisely.

Through the CE program, people develop the critical thinking skills they need to understand the complexities of ecological problems. Conservation Education also encourages people to act on their own to conserve natural resources and use them in a responsible manner by making informed decisions.

National Fire Plan/State and Volunteer Fire Assistance

The National Fire Plan (NFP) is a long-term strategy for reducing the effects of catastrophic wildfires throughout the nation. After the 2000 wildfire season, Congress authorized funding within the U.S. Departments of the Interior and Agriculture to implement the National Fire Plan (NFP).

There are five key points to the National Fire Plan.

- Increase in fire suppression capabilities (firefighting)
- Rehabilitation of burned areas and restoration of landscapes
- Reduction of hazardous fuels
- Assistance to communities
- Accountability to the public and to Congress

The DNRC NFP Program is implemented jointly within the Forestry Division's Forestry Assistance Bureau (FAB) and Fire and Aviation Management Bureau (FAMB). Existing Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act programs like State Fire Assistance (SFA) and Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (VFA) are all utilized to meet the goals of the NFP.

The Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program provides assistance to county fire agencies for suppression equipment, firefighter training, and supplies.

FOCUS AREA 1: FOREST BIODIVERSITY AND RESILIENCE

Resiliency is the capacity of a forest ecosystem to absorb disturbance and to reorganize while undergoing change, retaining ecosystem functionality and structure. Forest biodiversity is the variety and abundance of life forms, processes, functions, and structures of plants, animals, and other living organisms in forested areas. We promote forest resiliency by sustaining forest ecosystem biodiversity at stand and landscape scales through management and project monitoring.

Throughout all of Montana, an uncharacteristic increase in forest density within ponderosa pine and Douglas fir forests have left them vulnerable to larger more destructive wildfires that are difficult to control and often threaten community infrastructure within wildland urban interface (WUI) areas. These forest types, covering approximately 7 million acres in the State, experienced frequent low intensity fire prior to the 20th century, creating more open grown forests with larger trees that were more able to cope with that type of disturbance. A subsequent species conversion has reduced the ability of the forest to respond to a number of different types of disturbance.

In western and northwestern Montana, Douglas fir has replaced the more fire tolerant ponderosa pine on approximately 25-40% of the dry forest type.

In northwestern Montana, the effects of white pine blister rust and mountain pine beetle beginning in the 1930s, has reduced the extent of western white pine by 95% of its former range. The species that replaced white pine are primarily grand fir and Douglas-fir which are much more vulnerable to mortality caused by root disease which infests millions of acres in western and north western Montana. Due to a lack of disturbance during a time of cooler and moister climate from 1940 to 1980, fire resilient western larch has been reduced by approximately 40% throughout western and northwestern Montana, while being replaced by species less tolerant of fire. During the same time period, aspen has been replaced by conifers due to the lack of disturbance throughout central and eastern Montana and currently occupies only about a third of its former extent. Whitebark pine is in peril due to blister rust, mountain pine beetle, and succession with no disturbance during 1940-1980 throughout the State. Conifer succession into grassland areas is especially noticeable in central and eastern Montana due largely to lack of disturbance. Large expanses of lodgepole pine and ponderosa pine have become increasingly homogenous due to lack of disturbance. These stand dynamics have resulted in several million acres becoming susceptible to insects and disease concurrent to recent explosions of mountain pine beetle activity. This pattern of uncharacteristic homogeneity is most noticeable in central Montana.

The change and loss in diversity of composition, size, density and pattern has reduced habitat for some wildlife species that are very habitat specific. Uncharacteristic patterns of fragmentation from highways, urbanization and subdivision have reduced the ability of some habitat generalist to move between habitats.

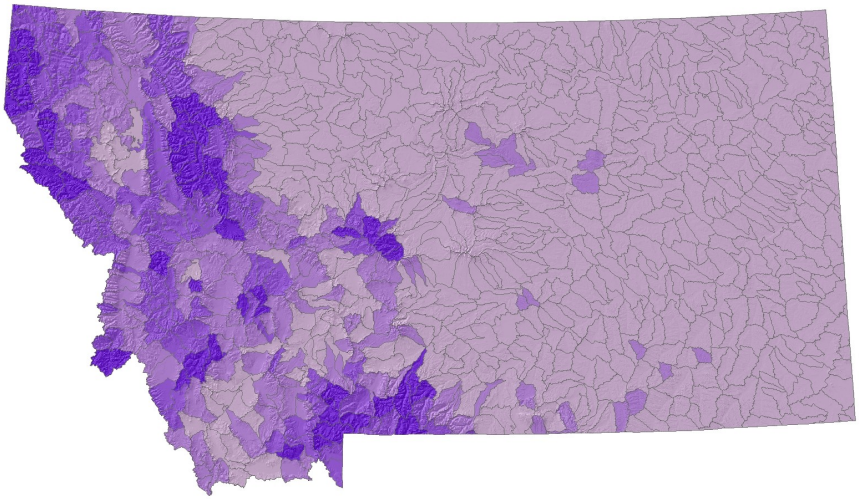


Figure 1 – SARS output for model objective "Manage and Restore Trees and Forest to Mitigate and Adapt to Global Climate Change ."

The Montana Forest Restoration Committee is primarily a volunteer consensus-based collaborative group, which was formed in January, 2008, to help guide restoration of Montana's National Forests. The group articulated a collective vision of ecologically-appropriate, scientifically-supported forest restoration principles representing a "zone of agreement" where controversy, delays, appeals and litigation are significantly reduced. It is one example of the collaborative problem-solving which is integral to the restoration of forest ecosystems with an eye toward biodiversity and resiliency.

Indicators:

- 30% of Montana's forest have been impacted by insects, disease and uncharacteristic wildfire in the last 10 years.
- A loss in diversity of the composition, size, density and the pattern of the forest has decreased the ability of Montana Forests to cope with disturbance resulting in a less resilient forest.
- Changing climatic conditions are shifting the arrangement or location of forest wildlife species composition and productivity.
- 5.2 million acres impacted by mountain pine beetle since the beginning of current outbreak.
- 2.5 million acres impacted by western spruce budworm in 2009.
- Root disease associated with changing forest species composition is pervasive in western Montana landscapes.
- 4 million acres impacted by wildfire since 2000, some of which has burned more severely than historically would have been expected, especially in areas of historical non-lethal fire regimes.
- 5% of ALL lineal stream lengths in forested watersheds are impaired.
- 48% of all forested watersheds contain at least one impaired stream reach or water body.

FOCUS AREA 2: WILDFIRE & PUBLIC SAFETY

Wildfire and Public Safety continue to challenge the wildland and structural fire services in Montana. In the past decade, wildland fires have threatened and, in some incidents, burned through small towns in Montana destroying homes, public infrastructures and businesses. Continued focus and expanded emphasis on wildfire prevention and suppression is critical in managing Montana's wildfires while providing for firefighter and public safety.

Statistics show that in coming years, we may experience shorter, wetter winters and warmer, drier summers. Within the last three years, the number of fires and the affected acreage have been growing. Recent reports from the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) indicate the average size of wildfires approached 100 acres, up from the ten-year average of 71 acres. The number and size of large fires (100,000+ acres) is also increasing. Throughout 2009, the U.S. experienced 12 large fires ranging up to 631,194 acres. Comparatively, in 1998, there were only 6 such large fires with the largest being 288,220 acres.

Another concern is the increase of residential development in the WUI. Areas where homes are intermixed with forests and wildlands are defined as the Wildland-Urban Interface or WUI. Within the WUI, residents and homes are at increased fire risk, and fire suppression is more costly. In 2000, 104 million, or 37% of the nation's population lived in the WUI.

The amount of WUI land in the Western United States is growing rapidly as communities are expanding into these wildland areas. In the Western U.S., the WUI increased in area by 61% during the 1990 -2000 period and in total housing units by 68%. Despite the current economic recession, development pressure within the Wildland-Urban Interface has not ceased. Current housing growth rates in the

WUI have been nearly triple the rates of increase outside the WUI.

Larger wildfires and the increasing cost of fire suppression pose significant financial hardship for "at-risk" local governments. Wildfires quickly overwhelm local, state, and even federal capabilities and capacities. All fire and emergency response agencies are facing current or potential reductions in personnel and/or funding. Long-lived (several weeks to months) fires require a large commitment of suppression resources.

Planning fire-adaptive communities and mitigating the impact of wildfire is crucial to protecting residents and reducing emergency management costs. Fires tend to make quick runs that cannot be stopped due to their particular size or behavior. Many homes are lost in the first several hours of a fire, which indicates that during the early periods of a fire, the only protection a structure has is the fuels mitigation approaches that were implemented beforehand.

Montana's Wildland Urban Interface

Based on the default WUI boundary determination provided for in the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA), which is 1/2—1 1/2 miles from communities, concentrations of structures, subdivisions and/or municipal boundaries, here's a glance at Montana's WUI ownership:

Federal Government:	3.7 million acres (forested) 521,000 acres (non-forest)
Local Government:	10,700 acres (forested) 7,500 acres (non-forest)
Private:	4.03 million acres (forested) 910,000 acres (non-forest)
State:	435,200 (forested) 599,000 (non-forest)
Tribal:	442,500 (forested) 756,300 (non-forested)

There are an estimated 350,927 structures in the wildland urban interface in Montana, and roughly 2/3 (234,000) are homes. At an average price of $150,000 per home, the value is more than $35 billion dollars.

Source: DNRC Fire & Aviation GIS Specialists

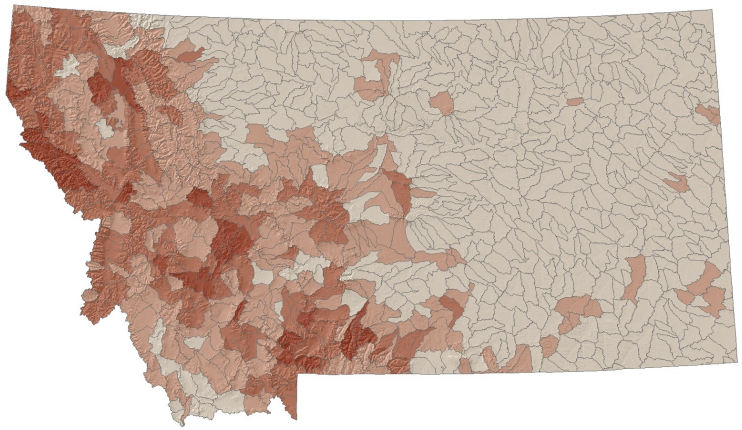


Figure 2 - SARS output for model objective "Assist Communities in planning for and reducing wildfire risks." (Darker colors denote watersheds requiring more direct assistance.)

Indicators:

- 4 million acres of land have burned from uncharacteristic wildfire in the last decade.
- Montana's WUI boundaries hold more than 350,000 structures.
- There are just over 26 million acres of Montana's counties identified as being in the WUI, which totals just fewer than 28% of all lands in the state.
- The WUI presents a unique challenge in terms of the transition between natural landscapes and development. The WUI remains the preferred setting for new housing. Nationwide, more than 60% of housing units built in the 1990s were constructed in or near wildland vegetation.
- Increasing risk for fire protection is directly contributed to parcelization—the changing ownership of many forested acres.
- 14 communities across Montana have taken action to help protect their homes from the threat of wildfire by completing actions to earn Firewise recognition.
- 5.2 million acres of forest land in Montana have been affected by mountain pine beetle; leaving stands of mostly dead trees.
- Studies by scientists in Montana indicate that the trend toward longer and often drier fire seasons will continue for some time.

FOCUS AREA 3: FOREST PRODUCTS & BIOMASS UTILIZATION

In order to maintain strength and competitiveness in changing markets and practice sustainable forestry, Montana's forest products sector must be adaptive and diversified. Maintaining mill capacity and infrastructure to utilize and process forest products is an essential component to managing forest lands in Montana. Montana mills began to diversify beyond sawlogs in 1950 and continue to manufacture value-added products including plywood, log homes, post and poles, engineered studs, and furniture as well as biomass residue-based products such as fiberboard, wood pellets, landscaping products, animal bedding and energy. This diversification of wood product manufacturing has historically allowed Montana mills to be more resilient in changing markets and continue to provide commodity wood products at local, state, regional and international levels.

While federal lands make up 65% of the landownership in Montana, a small and declining percentage of timber harvested comes from those federal forests. The majority of timber harvested in Montana comes off private lands with one-third from non-industrial private lands. Sustainable management of these non-industrial private forestlands is integral to a healthy forest landscape and to continued production of raw materials for wood product markets. Understanding that timber product markets provide economic value and incentive for private landowners to manage for healthy forests and fire hazard reduction, there is continued need to foster responsible management on private lands that integrates harvest of traditional and non-traditional forest products as a tool for good land stewardship while maintaining landowner objectives.

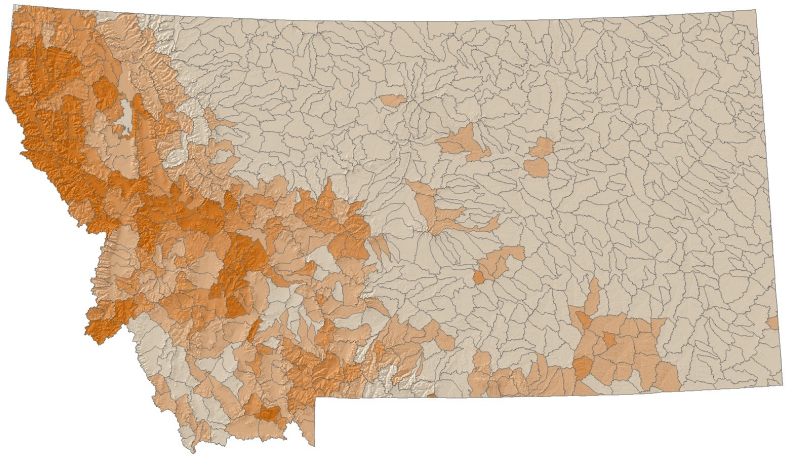
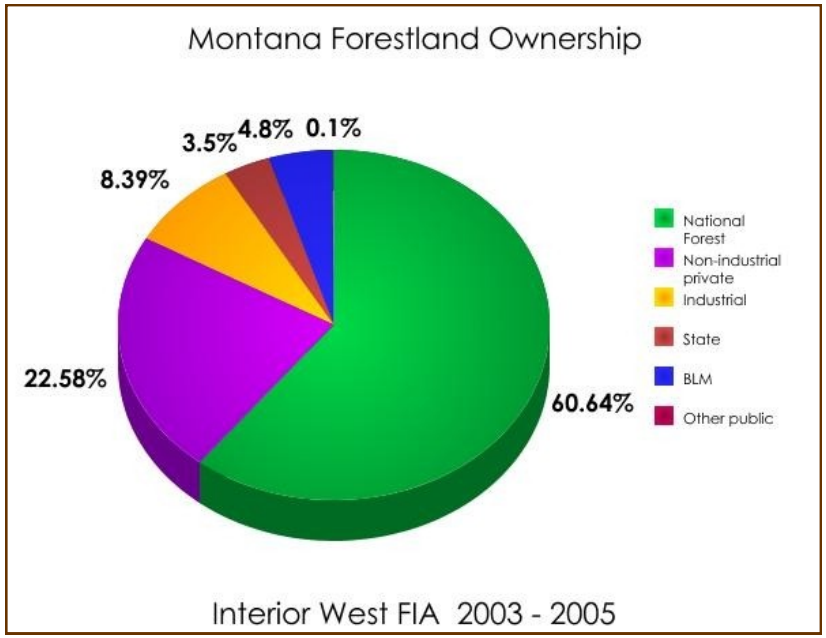
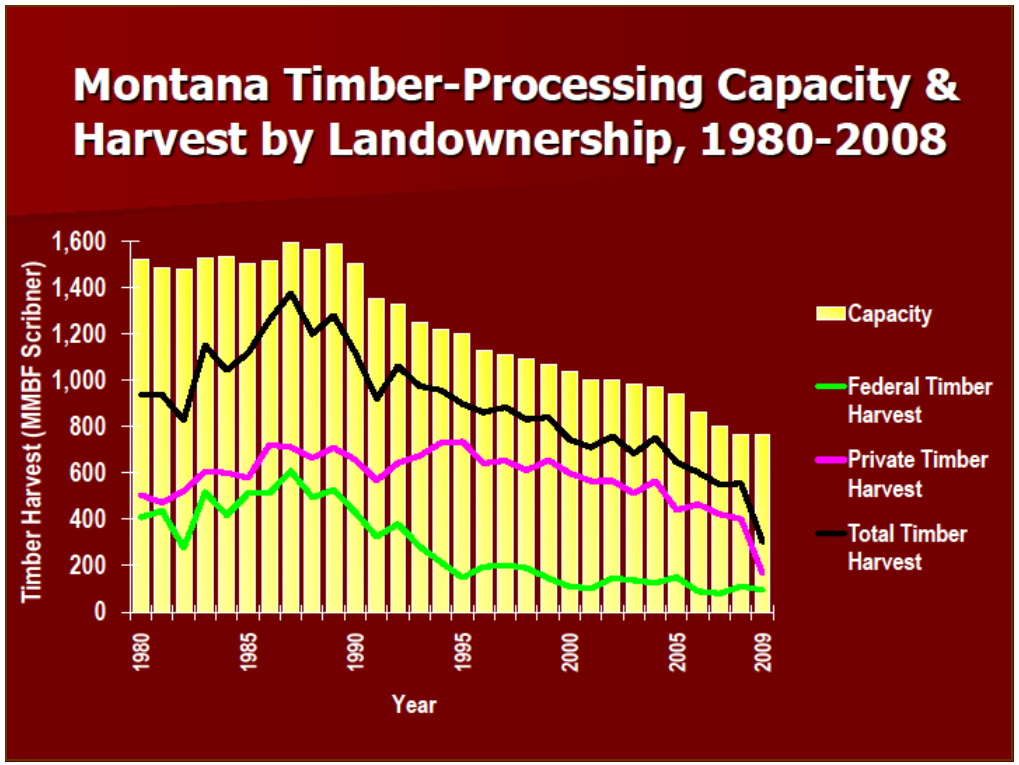


Figure 3 - SARS output for model objective "Actively and Sustainably Manage Montana Forests." (Darker colors denote watersheds with higher potential to meet objective.)





Indicators:

- Montana's forest put on 658 million cubic feet in annual growth, 199.4 million are lost due to mortality.
- Since 1990, 22 wood product mills have closed, with 12 larger mills (over 1 MMBF annually) remaining active in 2010.
- Since 2005, mill capacity in Montana declined by almost 60%. Since 2008, labor income in Montana's forest industry decreased by 30%.
- Direct employment in Montana's forest industry has declined to 7,070 workers in 2009—down 33% from 2005.
- In 2007, 75% of total timber harvested in Montana came from private lands (38 % from non-industrial and 37% from industrial ownerships) while 14% came from national forests

FOCUS AREA 4: SUSTAINABLE URBAN FOREST LANDSCAPES

An urban or community forest refers to a collection of trees and shrubs found growing in cities and towns. These areas include city parks, landscaped boulevards, and trees on public, private, and commercial lots. One that is sustainable relies on support by the residents in a community through funding, planning, and active involvement. Montana is home to over 185 cities, towns and census designated places where the majority of the state's population resides. With only four communities in Montana housing professional urban forestry staff, the concept of sustainable urban landscapes may seem far-fetched.

Montana's urban landscapes vary greatly from vegetated islands in the open prairie, to communities that have essentially grown out of the western forests, each with their own challenges in management, growth and sustainability. Monocultures of even aged trees, in their first rotation, are the norm, with native and exotic insects and pathogens whittling down the tree populations. Urban forest senescence is the largest challenge to sustainable urban landscapes as trees become decadent and begin failing. First generation forests tend to be fast-growing, early seral species with quick rotation and frequent challenges in urban environments.

The National Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program is a cornerstone of the Montana Urban & Community Forestry Program. The program provides direction, technical assistance, public attention and national recognition for UCF programs in thousands of towns and cities across America.

To be recognized as a Tree City USA, a community must meet the following criteria:

- **Establish a Tree Board or Department.**
- **Develop a Tree Care Ordinance**
- **Create a Community Forestry Program with an annual budget of at least $2 per capita**
- **Observe Arbor Day with an event and a proclamation**

There are currently 42 Tree City USAs in Montana.

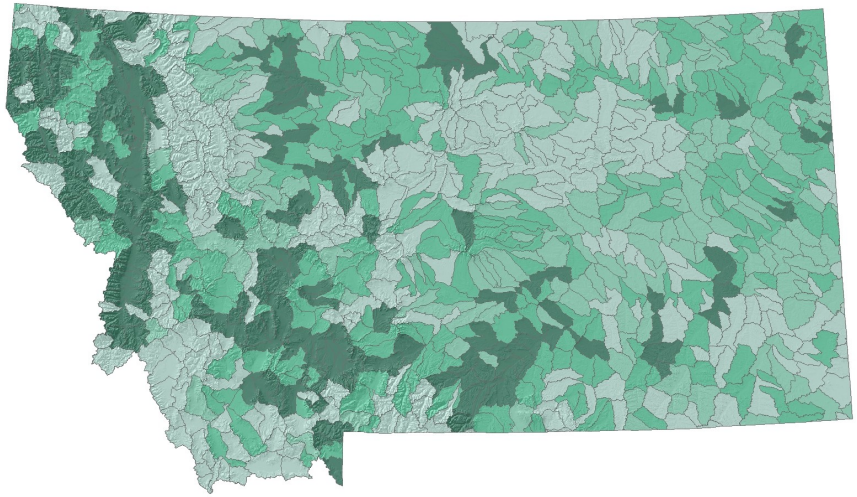
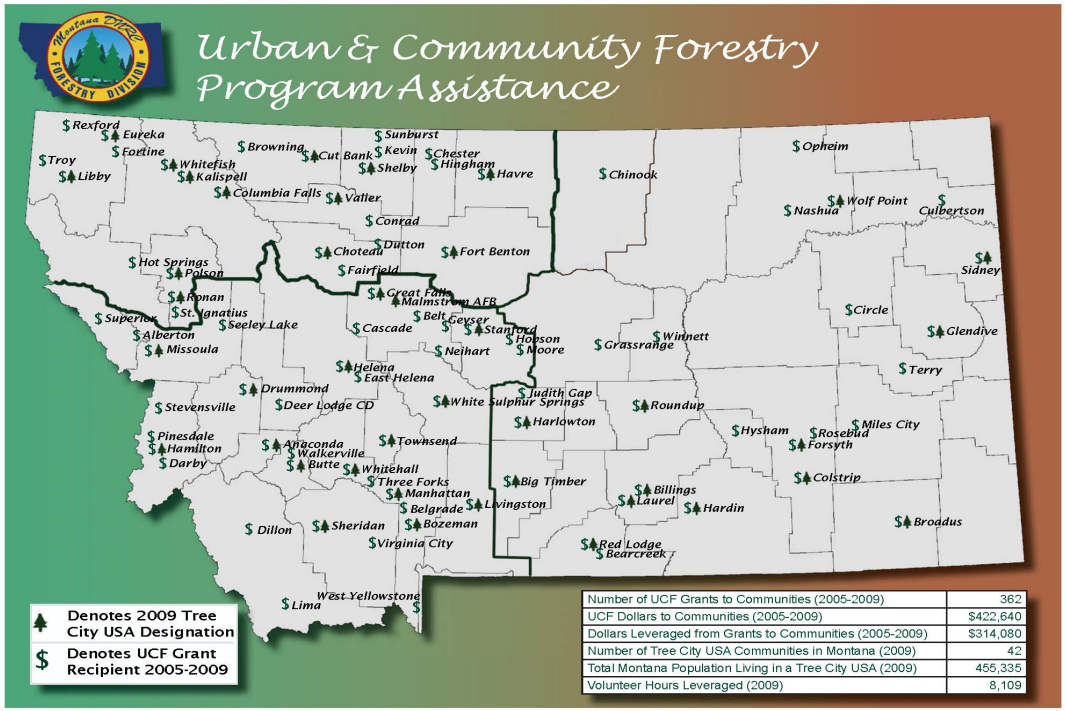


Figure 4 - SARS output for model objective "Improve air quality and conserve energy." (Darker colors denote watersheds with higher potential to meet objective.)



Indicators:

- Montana's urban forests are "first generation," monocultures.
- 62% of Montana's population lives in cities & towns. Thus, the greater population densities will benefit from a sustainable urban forest.
- The majority of urban forests are under private ownership, which shows a need for education to residents and landowners.
- 80 of Montana cities & towns rely exclusively on surface water source uptakes for public water supply. Community trees are essential natural filters to improve water quality.
- Urban vegetation plays a significant role in energy conservation, wildlife habitat, aesthetics, recreation opportunities, biomass production, etc.
- Montana's rural populations depend largely on tourism to help their economy. Having a clean, green community is vital towards attracting the tourism industry.

FOCUS AREA 5: CHANGING FOREST OWNERSHIP PATTERNS

Montana, like many states across the West, is experiencing massive divestiture of commercial timberlands as well as development of others. Large, contiguous blocks of private forests are at risk for fragmentation and land-use conversion driven by changing population demographics and economic and market forces. Impacts of fragmentation include wildlife habitat degradation, public access issues, and increased challenges of providing public services and fire protection for ex-urban developments. These trends have significant implications for Montana's social and environmental future.

There are 12 separate nonprofit land trusts organizations active in Montana. These conservation efforts work on private land to conserve working farms and ranches, protect water quality and quantity, protect wildlife habitat, preserve open lands and retain other values important to Montanans. The federal Forest Legacy Program draws on efforts from several of these groups to leverage its own fee title or easement-related conservation projects.

Montana's Forest Legacy Program is designed to conserve forest lands and to maintain natural and public values by assisting with the purchase of conservation easements or fee-title on private forest lands. The program offers an opportunity for private, local, state, and federal interests to cooperatively furnish forest landowners with new incentives to voluntarily protect their forest resources. Specifically, the intent of the Forest Legacy Program is to identify, protect and conserve environmentally important private forest lands that are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses.

The overall goal of the Montana Forest Legacy Program is to conserve and enhance land, water, wildlife, and timber resources while providing for the continued working of Montana's forest lands and the maintenance of natural and public values.
Legacy Project Goals:

- Protect the area's clean water and abundant fish and wildlife habitat
- Keep our forests productive and available for sustainable management
- Maintain the public access to this land for hiking, fishing, hunting and other outdoor recreation

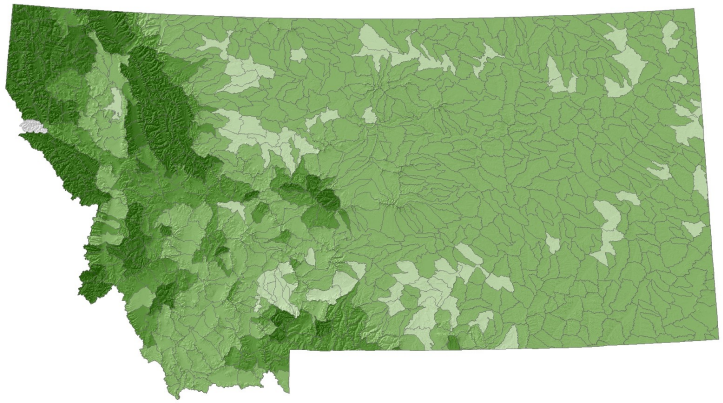
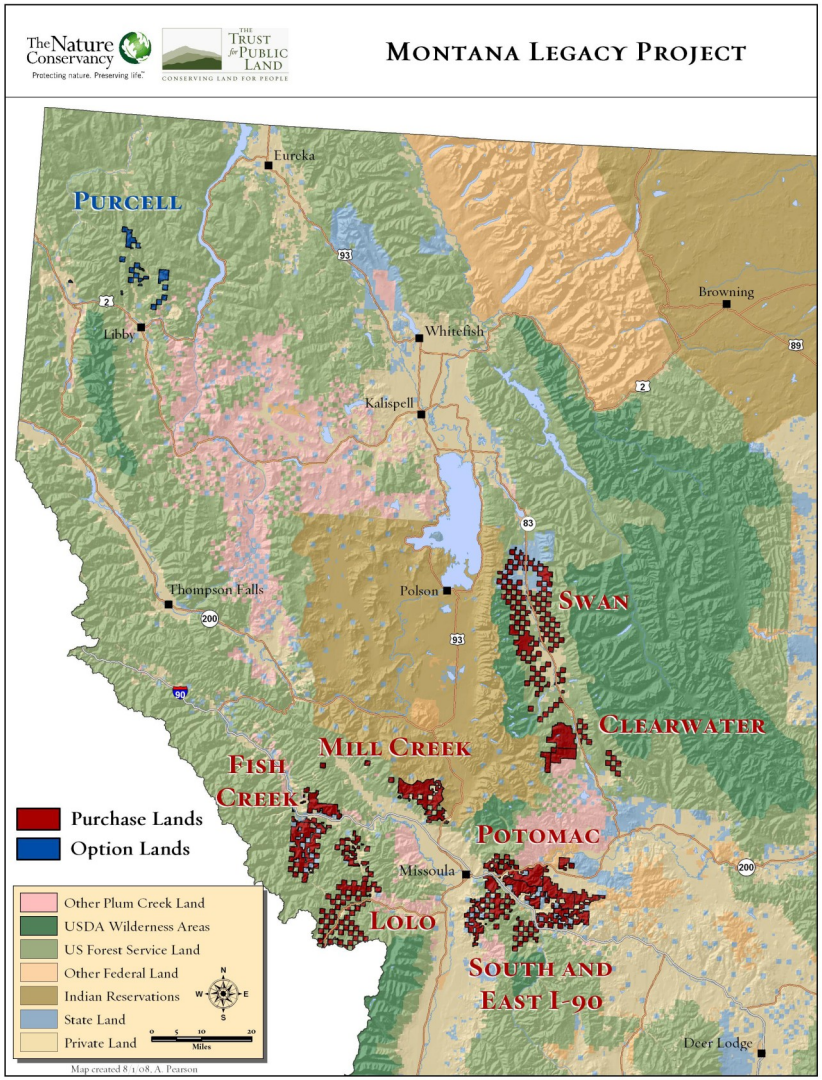


FIGURE 5 - SARS output for model objective "Identify and conserve high priority forests." (Darker colors denote watersheds with higher potential to meet objective.)

Securing a Future for People and Wildlife

A key component of the project is the purchase by The Nature Conservancy and The Trust for Public Lands of more than 310,000 acres of western Montana forest land from Plum Creek Timber Company. With this purchase, the Legacy partners aim to consolidate ownership and management of these lands, enable ongoing sustainable timber harvesting and (to the extent possible) preserve public access to these lands for recreation.



Indicators:

- Significant acreages of private forest land in Montana, possess greater value when developed for recreational or residential real estate than when maintained for timber production.
- Parcelization and conversion of forestland is further augmented by the transition, underway in many forest products companies, from vertically integrated structures to Real Estate Investment Trusts or Timber Investment Management Operations to other significant acreage developments.
- Case studies show increased fragmentation of other working landscapes (farms, ranches and family-owned forest lands) with increasing ex-urban migration and greater desire for recreational properties and other amenity values. Fragmentation is especially dramatic around major population centers including Missoula, Kalispell, Helena, Bozeman, Butte, and Billings.
- Currently, no favorable tax incentive system or payments for ecosystem services exists to encourage private forest landowners to maintain forest cover in lieu of exercising development rights.

STRATEGY MATRIX

The following pages include a matrix of strategies, tasks and deliverables for each focus area identified in the Strategy. It provides a mix of current program performance goals as well as important milestones for the future in meeting the needs identified in the Assessment.

The shaded items in the table are tasks which have been identified as integral to future success, but that fall outside of S&PF program authorities. In keeping with the intent of this Strategy — a comprehensive approach across all land ownerships and, this, all land managers, it was important to include these items and to offer encouragement and assistance as appropriate toward their completion.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

This strategy is intended to exist as a "living, dynamic" document. That is, its future relevance and success is directly dependent on its ability to adapt and change as conditions, trends and issues that face Montana's forest change. A significant group of interested stakeholders participated in the development of the Statewide Assessment of Forest Resources model (Assessment Model) and the Statewide Forest Resource Strategy (Strategy). The future success of development of the Strategy will be dependent on maintaining this level of stakeholder review, contribution and interaction. Montana DNRC will utilize the Assessment Model and the Strategy for deployment of all State & Private Forestry Program authorities and continue involving the State Assessment Working Group or some form of the work group as the model and strategy for working through future refinements. As has been established with several of the Western Competitive Grant projects, the Strategy will facilitate the planning process and hopeful leveraging of additional watershed projects to maximize positive influence on the landscape. By 'blurring' ownership boundaries and focusing on critical landscapes, greater change and maximum efficiencies may take place.

Focus Area 1: Forest Biodiversity & Resiliency	YEARS			DELIVERABLES
	2011	2012	2013	
Strategy 1: Manage ecosystem and biotic composition to achieve ecological integrity through recovery of species diversity, water quality and quantity, soil quality and function by implementing best available science, and adaptive management				
Participate in the development of monitoring protocols, at both the project level and broad scale, and programs to help inform adaptive management.		x		Develop project monitoring protocols.
		X		Develop broadscale monitoring approaches using FIA inventory data.
		x		Provide analysis of FIA data on ALL lands in Montana.
Protect and improve watershed heath, including stream, soil and riparian functions.	x	x	x	Direct grant proposals towards critical landscapes.
Prioritize funding for National Fire Plan Western States Wildland Urban Interface grant applications which clearly demonstrate an intention to employ treatments which restore fire resistant conditions in fire adapted vegetation types through mechanical and prescribed fire treatments.	x	x	x	Develop and employ a minimum of 1 screening criteria to award additional points to project applications with a restoration focus.
Provide technical guidance to grant recipients in developing treatment plans and prescriptions which emulate historic disturbance and promote forest resiliency by forest type and fire regime.	x	x	x	Ensure specific treatment plan criteria is integrated into new grants agreements.
				Inspect projects a minimum of once per year to provide feedback and adjust plans.
Reestablish fire as a natural process on National Forest System Lands through mechanical treatments and then reintroduction of prescribed fire. Should be tailored to specific fire regimes of each forest type. MANAGED FIRE IN ROADLESS AREAS	x	x	x	Develop diverse severity- mixed conifer guidance for NFS restoration projects.
Improve terrestrial and aquatic habitat connectivity.		x		Develop statewide climate change/ adaptation/carbon mitigation plan.

Note: those items in the table which are shaded have been identified as important tasks which fall outside of DNRC's State & Private Forestry program authorities.

Strategy 2: Engage community and interested parties in forest restoration and/or rehabilitation projects.				
	2011	2012	2013	
Following the model of the Blackfoot Watershed Multi-Agency Working Group, develop multi-agency, multi-stakeholder collaborative groups.		x		Develop on additional multi-agency working group in a critical watershed over the next 3 years.
Provide opportunities for interested stakeholders in refining the state assessment model and response strategy.	x			Ensure stakeholders groups from high priority areas participate in updates and revisions.
Expand the Montana Forest Restoration Committee Efforts to 2 more federal forests.	x	x		Reinforce existing federal forest restoration projects.
Coordinate local stakeholder collaborative efforts through the DNRC—Forestry Division website.	x			Create a MT Collaboratives web site link hosting updated materials, meeting minutes, upcoming events.
Strategy 3: Increase terrestrial carbon sequestration on soil carbon sinks.				
Use the best available science in identifying climate change risks and adaptation strategies.	x	x	x	Develop tools to adaptively manage and monitor the effects of climate change on aquatics and wildlife habitat.
				Establish "Smart Practices" for managing natural resources in response to climate change.
Incorporate existing climate information into policy development and program planning.		X	X	Develop climate matrix to inform policy and program development.
Manage for increased carbon sequestration by thinning forest stands.		X		Develop a forest carbon offset demonstration and research project to determine the change in carbon sequestration between a managed forest stand and an unmanaged one including different tree species.
Implement sanitation harvest in old growth stands to deter carbon loss.		X	X	Develop old growth sanitation harvest guidelines to optimize carbon storage within old growth characteristic stands.

Focus Area 2: Wildfire & Public Safety	YEARS			DELIVERABLES
	2011	2012	2013	
Strategy 1: Mitigate the risk to people, property and infrastructure of catastrophic losses from fires in the wildland urban interface.				
Promote understanding of Montana's interface challenge by identifying the interface and high-risk areas.	X			Complete a map showing the WUI boundary as defined by local government. Make product available to partner, the public and stakeholders.
		X	x	Develop outreach materials about the value of assets at risk from fires in the WUI.
	x	x	x	Support groups that promote homeowner responsibility in the WUI such as Firewise, FireSafe, Fire Ready, and Ready, Set, Go!
Continue to provide subdivision review, risk rating, home assessments and other tools to inform private landowners about their wildfire risk and possible mitigations.	x	x	x	Conduct assessments as requested and work with county fire wardens on subdivision review.
Promote guidelines for development in the interface.	x	x	x	Guidelines developed (2009). Work on marketing/dissemination strategy to ensure they are broadly available.
Continue to work with county governments on developing and updating Community Wildfire Protection Plans as a prerequisite for grants and a planning tool for prioritizing projects.	x	x	x	Make copies of all county CWPP's available on the DNRC website.
Assist communities in becoming Firewise Communities and in establishing local FireSafe councils.	x	x	x	Maintain current Firewise Communities/Firesafe Councils and seek to add at least one new one each year.

Strategy 2: Ensure effective fire response.				
	2011	2012	2013	
Maintain a network of state, local and federal cooperators with the common mission of protecting the people, property and resources in the State of Montana, through safe and effective fire suppression, education, engineering and prevention activities.	X	x	X	Update/maintain fire suppression agreements with state, federal and local government partners to ensure the highest level of fire protection across all land ownerships.
Ensure efficient fire operations.	X	X	X	Update and implement all mobilization and operation plans and protocols prior to the start of the fire season every year.
Work with local fire departments to acquire necessary equipment, training and supplies for effective and safe fire response.	x	x	X	Utilize the Federal Excess Property Program and the Firefighter Property Program to acquire equipment for fire departments.
	x	X	X	Deliver grant program assistance through the Volunteer Fire Assistance grant program annually.
Strategy 3: Ensure the fuels reduction projects are implemented in priority areas to protect communities at risk.				
Prioritize projects to be funded through the Western Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program and the Community Protection Fuels Mitigation Grant Program.	x	x	x	Require a current CWPP as prerequisite for grant funding. Encourage updates to WUI maps upon completion of new projects.
				Use interagency screening committee to prioritize grant applications.
Seek opportunities to implement fuels reduction projects across ownership boundaries.	X	X	X	Share project information with peer agencies to see if there is an opportunity for a complimentary project. Give priority consideration to multi-agency projects.

Strategy 4: Continue with wildland fire prevention programs.				
	2011	2012	2013	
Track fire causes and note trends. Direct public education outreach efforts appropriately.	X	x	X	Review/consolidate prevention plans from area field offices. Solicit funding for targeted media campaigns as appropriate.
Continue public education efforts regarding the two greatest human caused fire causes: escape debris burns and abandonded campfires.	x	x	x	Continue school education through Keep Montana Green, run statewide fire prevention awareness media campaigns.
Implement the Fire Restrictions and Closures process during fire season.	x	x	X	Coordinate with local restrictions committees and provide statewide leadership in the restriction and closures process.

Focus Area 3: Forest Products & Biomass Utilization	YEARS			DELIVERABLES
	2011	2012	2013	
Strategy 1: Support forest products infrastructure in Montana.				
Emphasize retention and strengthening of existing infrastructure and encourage diversification of mill portfolios and new opportunities within the wood products value chain.	x	x	x	Provide financial assistance to a minimum of 1-2 entities to conduct feasibility studies, retrofits and/or improvements at mills.
Prioritize grant applications that support wood product markets.	x	x	x	Provide preference points to projects which employ logging contractors and send wood products to mills.
Leverage partnerships and collaboration to address issues and find solutions to barriers for the wood products sector while exploring emerging opportunities.	x	x	x	Host monthly meetings of Montana Woody Biomass Committee.
				Develop state forester's Woody Biomass Utilization Strategy. (Complete 2010)
				Participate in regular collaborative planning efforts around the state.
				Participate in a minimum of 3 locally-bases collaborative efforts related to promotion of biomass utilization.
Encourage state and federal policies and strategies that sustain and enhance opportunities for the forest products sector.	X	X	X	Create a National Forest Products Bonding Pool.
				Advocate for permanent authority for federal stewardship contracting.
				Develop Utilization Standards to be used in timber sale administration.

Strategy 2: Promote and facilitate development of woody biomass energy and non-energy infrastructure.				
	2011	2012	2013	
Identify and address policy barriers to biomass energy development.	X	x		Establish parity for biomass energy in Production Tax Credits.
				Woody biomass from federal lands defined as "renewable."
Provide grant funding and technical support to Assessment priority areas for biomass supply, markets and technologies.	X	X	X	Provide partial grant funding for construction of a minimum of 1-2 biomass energy projects at public facilities.
				Fund a minimum of 3 engineering assessments per year for small-scale biomass energy systems for public entities.
				Provide cost-share for a minimum of 2 biomass utilization assessments for private entities.
Provide technical assistance to existing and emerging biomass energy users.	X	X	X	Conduct a minimum of 2 biomass supply assessments per year for small-scale energy projects.
				Develop "Lessons Learned in Community Wood Energy" report (complete 2011).
				Coordinate Energy Education Forum for mill owners (complete 2010).
Address social/environmental concern related to biomass harvest and use for energy.	X			Develop state biomass harvest guidelines (complete 2010).
				Public information on DNRC website.

	2011	2012	2013	
Act as clearinghouse for information and assistance related to woody biomass utilization.	X	x	x	Serve as technical advisors to biomass projects in state.
				Maintain DNRC Biomass Utilization website.
Strategy 3: Provide supply of materials while emphasizing value of ecosystem goods and services obtained through sustainable land management.				
Provide outreach to NIPF landowners on value of harvesting traditional and non-traditional forest products as a tool for good stewardship.	x	x	x	Ensure "harvesting as a management tool" is integrated into Forest Stewardship Program workshops.
	X	X	x	Work with the US Forest Service through the Memorandum of Agreement on forest planning.
	X	x	x	Initiate 3-5, 50,000+ acre 10-year landscape level stewardship projects.
	X	X	x	Implement 4 restoration projects on federal lands by 2010.

Focus Area 4: Sustainable Urban Forest Landscapes	YEARS			DELIVERABLES
	2011	2012	2013	
Strategy 1: Gain an enhanced understanding of urban forest resources in cities and towns across Montana.				
Survey communities to capture status and condition of Montana urban forests.	X	X	X	Compile statewide sample inventory of urban forest resources for cities & towns.
Provide financial incentives for communities to perform tree inventories, or extract statewide sample from existing data sources.	x	x	x	Target 1/3 of Program Development grant projects for comprehensive tree inventories, or at least 4 inventories each year.
Maintain and enhance ties to all Montana communities — communicate any local efforts or activities that may affect urban forests.	x	x	x	Revise and implement existing marketing strategy to increase awareness of Urban Forestry, promoting its values and benefits.
Utilize Montana Urban & Community Forestry Association to serve as an advisory body to the State Forester and Montana's Urban & Community Forestry Program Manager.	x	x	x	Expand membership to include broader base of representatives. Hold twice-yearly meetings.
Strategy 2: Develop and provide educational resources and outreach opportunities to target audiences in critical landscapes.				
Utilize the Tree City USA program as a vehicle to target and recruit cities and towns.	X	X	X	Maintain at least 40 Tree City USA Communities for Montana. Target cities and towns in priority watersheds if not enrolled.
Serve as the central source for professional guidance and providing educational materials.	X	X	X	Hold a minimum of 2 ISA Arborist Certification tests each year; acquire the newest publications available as a reference library for urban forestry.

	2011	2012	2013	
Give training and workshops geared toward proper tree care practices, tree boards, community planning, etc.	X	x	x	Provide a minimum of one technical workshop in each region each year.
Strategy 3: Minimize catastrophic loss or threats to the urban forest resource.				
Track the status and spread of emerging insects and disease problems throughout the West.	x	x	x	Participate in twice-yearly Western States Urban Forestry Coordinator Meetings, multi-state conference calls.
Develop protocols for managing any new threat to the urban forest.	X			Create management plan and informational materials for Mountain Pine Beetle in urban settings in 2011.
Educate and inform residents on proper tree selection, maintenance, and placement to avoid loss due to wind, storm, and fire damage.	x	X	X	Make opportunities available i.e. workshops on planting and care; share information and materials with related program managers i.e. entomologist, fire prevention specialist.
Provide incentives to encourage involvement in community planning with regards to the urban forest.	X	X	X	Provide adequate networking environment for communities to access pertinent information; provide Program Development funds.
Strategy 4: Focus program resources on sustaining 'managing' communities and assisting 'developing' communities in critical landscapes.				
Offer financial incentives to communities for projects that will improve their urban forestry program.	X	X	X	Offer up to $150,000 in Urban Forestry grants each year for education & program development.
Develop permanent partnerships with 'managing' communities that have full time urban forestry staff.	X	X	X	Utilize staff to hold prominent roles, such as state representation at conferences, regional ISA, etc.

	2011	2012	2013	
Pursue 'developing' communities with potential to staff an urban forester.			X	Secure staff positions in Helena, Kalispell and Butte.
Provide targeted regional UCF assistance.	X	X	X	Retain 3 regional UCF staff to assist targeted communities throughout the state.

Focus Area 5: Changing Forest Ownership Patterns	YEARS			DELIVERABLES
	2011	2012	2013	
Strategy 1: Minimize fragmentation by prioritizing areas "at risk" for management.				
Capitalize on opportunities to align habitats of importance as identified by the Forest Legacy Assessment of Need with "State Assessment defined" forested environments at risk for fragmentation.		x		Provide a minimum of 3 proposals for the 2012 Forest Legacy application cycle which focus on critical landscapes identified by the State Assessment.
Engage with ongoing efforts to connect people with their natural environments.	x	x	x	Participate and promote programs like Great Outdoors Initiative, Project Learning Tree, Natural Resources Youth Camp, and A Child for Every Forest.
Emphasize conservation of intact forest and methods for achieving this as a central pillar of Forest Stewardship Planning Workshops for family forest owners.	x	x	x	Host 4 stewardship planning workshops yearly and provide information on conservation easements as part of course material.
Provide outreach and education to landowners on methods of conserving forest and working lands intact (conservation easements, community lands, etc.) and providing for connectivity between critical habitats.	X	X	X	Host minimum one landowner workshop per year on conservation easements, to be delivered either by DNRC or in partnership with another cooperator.

	2011	2012	2013	
Prioritize consolidation of DNRC and FWP lands to facilitate contiguous management of forest lands.	X			Finalize consolidation of DNRC and FWP lands around the Swan State Forest.
	X	X	x	Identify 2 additional areas in the state to be targeted for consolidation.
Support strategic conservation easements by public agencies and conservation organizations through allocations of financial and technical assistance.	X	X	X	Host minimum one landowner workshop per year on conservation easements, to be delivered either by the DNRC or in partnership with another cooperator.